

BLACK WILLOW

Salix nigra

Located along streams and lakes and in rich swamps throughout the Division. Also known as Swamp- or Scythe-leaved- Willow.

A shrub or tree up to 20 m high, with flaky, dark brown to blackish bark. Branchlets brittle at the base but flexible above, young - greenish and downy, older - darker and smooth; angles extending down the branch from the leaf-base. The leaves are long-lance shaped, tip gradually tapering to a point and narrowed at the base, often scythe-shaped, somewhat hairy when young, becoming hairless with age, deep green on both sides (or paler on underside), short stalked; 5 to 15 cm long, 0.5 to 1.5 cm wide; beginning to expand at flowering time. The stem at each leaf node is surrounded by 2 finely-toothed wing-like appendages which may persist or fall off. Female catkins generally longer (to 8 cm) than male; flowers clustered in whorls along the axis of the slender cylindric catkin; blooming in April and May; (resembling flower of pussy-willow).





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The buds and tender twigs are important food for several species of grouse and the pine grosbeak; the bark, buds and wood are important to beaver, hare, and other mammals; the twigs and leaves serve as browse for deer, elk and moose.